Chapter 13

PAID BENEFITS FOR RETIRED EMPLOYEES

C. Bridge Program

a. Qualified confidential employees employed after July 1, 1997 are eligible for a health benefits bridge program to cover the period of time between retirement and eligibility for Medicare coverage. So long as the eligible Medicare recipient has fulfilled the requirements of this section, the bridge shall remain in effect during the period of any delay in initial receipt of Medicare benefits which is not the fault of the recipient.

b. A qualified confidential employee under this program is one:

i. who is age 55 or older, who has retired from the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) or the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) (or who has applied for and is eligible to receive a service retirement from either of said retirement systems), and who has rendered service to the District at least half-time as a contract or regular employee for fifteen (15) or more years immediately preceding his or her retirement. No absence from the service of the District under a leave of absence and no period of approved reduced service shall be deemed as a break in the continuity of service required by this program. Time spent on any Staff Development Leave shall be deemed to be full-time service for the purpose of the program; and

ii. who has provided evidence that he/she has Medicare coverage.

c. A qualified spouse or bona fide domestic partner is one:

i. who is at the time the qualified confidential employee retired under this program and thereafter the spouse or bona fide domestic partner of the employee; or

ii. who was the spouse or bona fide domestic partner of the qualified employee on the date of the employee's retirement and is at the time of death of the retiree and thereafter, the surviving unmarried spouse or bona fide domestic partner of the retiree; or

iii. who was the spouse or bona fide domestic partner of an employee who at the time of his or her death was at least 55 years of age and rendered sufficient service as defined in this chapter to qualify for paid benefits upon retirement and is an unmarried surviving spouse or qualified domestic partner while receiving benefits.

d. Each retired confidential employee who qualifies under the terms of this chapter and his or her eligible spouse or bona fide domestic partner as defined
shall be eligible for District health and hospital benefits, prescription drug
benefits, vision care benefits and dental care benefits as provided in this
chapter and described in Chapter 6.

e. To be able to provide confidential employees a bridge program that is
comparable to that offered to other employees, the District's contribution
shall be based on the SEIU salary schedule. After retirement, under this
program the District shall contribute monthly towards the payment of the
retiree's benefits as defined herein:

i. During each month of eligibility under the program the monthly
contribution shall be one twelfth of the annual sum of 2.8% of
Range 70, Step 6 of the SEIU salary schedule, unless a lower
percentage is allowed under 5.d below.

ii. If the confidential employee has a spouse or qualified domestic
partner on the date of retirement, and the spouse or domestic partner
has no medical benefits coverage as a primary insured, the District
will contribute up to 5.6% of Range 70, Step 6 of the SEIU Salary
Schedule for the premiums for the retiree and the spouse/domestic
partner. The monetary equivalent of the applicable percentage shall
be applied to payments for these benefits of the covered retired
employee, spouse, surviving spouse or domestic partner.

iii. Should the actual cost of the benefits selected cost more than the
above, the covered individual(s) shall pay the difference to the District
each month.

iv. Should the actual cost of the benefits selected by a covered
individual amount to less than the allowed percentage then the
actual percentage shall be that which reflects the actual cost of the
selected benefits.

f. The benefits provided to eligible confidential employees and spouses and
bona fide domestic partners under this program shall cease when the
employee, unmarried surviving spouse or bona fide domestic partner as the
case may be qualifies for and begins receiving Medicare coverage
consistent with C.1 above.

g. If confidential employees are given any options regarding health benefit plans
(for example, the choice between Kaiser and the District's self-insured plan)
during the bridge period, the covered employee (and/or qualified spouse or
domestic partner) shall receive benefits in accordance with the plan or plans
under which the retired confidential employee was receiving benefits at the
time of retirement and he or she shall not be allowed to change after
retirement except during open enrollment periods.

h. If a spouse or bona fide domestic partner of a retired confidential employee
receives benefits under any other health benefits plan as a primary insured, the
benefits provided under the other plan shall be primary for that spouse or bona
fide domestic partner and those benefits shall not be provided under this
program.

i. To obtain the benefits provided under this chapter, every confidential
employee and eligible surviving unremarried spouse or domestic partner shall
file an application for the benefits with the Office of Human Resources and
shall complete all necessary enrollment forms before the last date of his or her
employment with the District. The spouse or domestic partner will sign a
statement verifying that he/she does not have medical benefits insurance in
his/her own right as a primary insured. The employee is required to provide
information to Medicare to verify Medicare eligibility and to update that
information as appropriate.

j. The benefits provided under this program are subject to change or
termination by mutual agreement between the confidential employees
group and the Board.